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REFORM DRAWING NEAR?

IS the future shape of local government soon to be determined? Both Sir Trustram Eve, chairman of the Local Government Boundary Commission, and the general purposes committee of the Association of Municipal Corporations, appear to believe that it is.

Addressing the recent conference of the Association, Sir Trustram surveyed the problems before the Commission and the possible solutions, and added:

"The time for our recommendations must be at the end of this year. We do not think it right that there should be any longer any uncertainty. If we wait for agreement among all authorities, we shall wait for ever . . . What is now wanted, is a decision by the Government of the day after considering the Commission's impartial summary of the views of the authorities."

Sir Trustram dropped several hints about the way the minds of the Commission are working. It was generally agreed, he said, that there must be two-tier government over "geographically" the greater part of England and Wales. And where there was two-tier government, the second-rank authorities must have sufficient power and standing to make them worth-while—so as to attract both the interest of electors and the services of the best type of councillor. That means, among other things, that many county districts (all of which will have equal powers if the commissioners' views are adopted) must have greater areas, population, and monetary resources. And that, in turn, implies the extinction of many small authorities as individual entities and their fusion into larger wholes.

The second main problem in establishing an effective two-tier system is to find a method of delegation which will leave the major authority with ample overriding powers in large issues without depriving the lower body of initiative. "We receive many complaints," said Sir Trustram, "that delegation means little or nothing, that consents to mend a tap or erect a flagpost are necessary in many cases."

Is there no way of overcoming this obstacle to a rational and efficient redistribution of local government functions? Some business-like compromise must be found if local government is to avoid the menace of atrophy through the transfer of its major functions to *ad hoc* or central authorities.

A.M.C. Stalemate

THE truth of Sir Trustram's statement that "if we wait for agreement among all authorities we shall wait for ever" was strikingly demonstrated on November 18, when a special conference of the Association of Municipal Corporations, called to consider a report of its general purposes committee on this very subject, ended abortively, with complete stalemate between the opposing views of county boroughs and non-county boroughs.

The report, abandoning the A.M.C.'s earlier advocacy of the big "all purposes" authority in all areas, suggested that "in suitable cases" (whatever that may mean) a two-tier, or possibly in some cases a three-tier system should be considered. Though the report was deliberately vague on the details of the plan, it apparently had in mind a system of "major" authorities of undetermined size but based, roughly, on the existing county, responsible for planning and some administration, allied with a system of "minor" authorities responsible for the control and administration of "a sufficient number of services of such importance as to attract the right type of public representative and to justify the appointment of officers of the requisite calibre." The committee made no attempt to allocate functions to the two types of authority, though it emphasised that this was "the crucial question upon which the operation of a two-tier system would depend."

County Boroughs' Protest

Councillors for the minor authorities should be directly elected, as now, but those for the major authorities should, for an experimental period of six years, be directly elected in part only, the remainder being appointed by the minor authorities.

Such a system, the report claimed, would allow of larger areas for major purposes, would preserve the identity of all boroughs, and would provide a system capable not only of performing all existing functions effectively, but also of making possible the return to local government of those functions it has lost.

But the meeting as a whole would have none of it. After vigorous and heated protests on behalf of county boroughs, their representatives invoked an Association rule prescribing that, where there is a conflict of interest between two classes of boroughs, the Association as a whole shall take no action. Though the A.M.C. as a body will thus make no recommendations to the Boundary Commission, the non-county borough representatives agreed to prepare a similar report on their own and send it to the Commission. So the ball is again passed to Sir Trustram and his colleagues.

Public Relations Comes to Town

NALGO could not have hoped for a finer endorsement of its public relations policy than is accorded to it by the report of the Consultative Committee on Local Government Publicity, which we summarise this month. Here we have a committee representing all the associations of local authorities and the Ministry of Health not only paying generous tribute to the Association's pioneer work in this field, but adopting its views and policies almost in full and recommending all local authorities to give effect to them. True, the committee differs from the now famous report on the subject of the NALGO Reconstruction Committee on two points—the need for a local authority public relations committee with a public relations officer, and for a National Public Relations Council. But those are matters of machinery only, and if the aims of public relations—in respect of which the Consultative Committee is in full accord with the Reconstruction Committee—can be secured in other ways, NALGO will not complain.

To the Association, then, this report is a document of outstanding importance, not merely confirming the rightness of its conclusions, but pointing the way to further advance along the road it has successfully explored.

Branches' Opportunity

The next step is to secure adoption of the measures it so emphatically recommends by all local authorities: and in that task branches must play the leading part. In the next few weeks, all local government branches will be urged to bring the report to the notice of their councils, to invite them to consider its recommendations, and to offer the wholehearted co-operation of the branch and its members in carrying them out. Now that the policy has been endorsed by the Ministry and the associations, and the Minister of Health has clarified the powers under which local authorities may spend money on public relations, the task should be materially lightened, and progress correspondingly accelerated.

Already, largely as a result of branch initiative, nearly fifty local authorities have appointed public relations officers, and many more have adopted a public relations policy in part. Those numbers must be greatly and speedily expanded. Few activities could be of greater benefit to local government and those who serve it. For, on the one hand, public relations will strengthen local government by making it better understood, more democratic in practice as well as in theory, more responsive to the public need, and therefore more popular and influential; and on the other hand, it will strengthen the position of the local government officer by helping him to win that recognition of the value of his contribution to national wellbeing which he must have if he is to obtain satisfaction of his claims to a reasonable salary and conditions of service. The policy is an essential part of every aspect of NALGO's work, whether it be to improve the material conditions of its members, to assist them to a better education, or to give them the opportunity of a full and satisfying career of public service. This report gives us, at last, the chance to develop it in every local authority. Let us seize that chance with both hands.

It is the aim of "Local Government Service" to encourage the fullest freedom of opinion and expression within the Association. Unless the fact is expressly stated, therefore, views put forward in this journal—whether in the editorial columns or in signed articles—should not necessarily be regarded as expressing the considered policy of the Association.

Eight Electricity Leaders Say What They Think Of NALGO And Call For—

A Change of Name | **Specialist Officers** | **A Separate Division** | **More Active Recruiting**

IN the 18 months since Conference decided to open NALGO's doors to the staffs of non-municipal utility undertakings, the Association has recruited more than 15,000 officers of electricity undertakings and smaller numbers of officers of gas and water companies. What do they think of it? Are they satisfied with what the Association is doing for them, or do they feel it should do more? To find out, we put a series of questions to eight prominent representatives of the electricity members, company and municipal. Here, in summary form, are the questions and their answers.

Causes of Dissatisfaction

1. Are you satisfied with the services NALGO has provided for you? If not, why not—and what, if any, additional services would you like the Association to provide?

Of the eight, two only—Messrs. KELL and FORSTER—express unqualified satisfaction, three qualify their satisfaction, and three are dissatisfied. Causes of dissatisfaction include:

> Failure to adapt the organisation immediately it was decided to recruit company staffs: inadequate progress with recruitment now—C. W. DALE.
>
> The "appalling time-lag" in obtaining answers to members' questions; the apparent eagerness with which higher grades are defended while action in defence of lower grade officers is discouraged; undue reliance on precedent and "lack of initiative" in establishing new precedents favourable to NALGO—the suggested remedy for which is higher subscriptions to make possible better equipped district offices and sub-offices, and steps to develop faith in NALGO's ability to get results—F. NEWMAN.

Of those generally satisfied, A. W. CALE fears the possible congestion of "cases to be dealt with after vesting date," and suggests some strengthening of district machinery to deal with it; and J. F. CARTER complains of lack of anything to "show" since members were recruited: "they are always asking when they will be placed on a respectable scale of salaries".

"Separate Division Essential"

2. Do you favour the creation of a separate division within NALGO for the staffs of electricity undertakings?

To this, seven of the replies give an emphatic "Yes!" Only A. E. KELL disagrees with the majority view, pointing out that, if a separate division were set up for electricity undertakings, it would have to be followed by similar divisions for gas, transport, and other sections and might lessen the efficacy of the Association as a whole. He feels that the need would be met by augmenting the N.E.C. with experienced representatives of electricity staffs, company and municipal, able to provide a staff side for the projected new Whitley council for the service.

Of the majority, C. W. DALE considers a separate division essential, since "electricity staff problems differ from those of local government officers and under existing organisation do not get the consideration they deserve"; R. A. COLMAN agrees, adding that the Association's organising staff cannot take the necessary interest in electricity matters when they are so busy with local government officers; R. C. FORSTER wants it "unless you change the name of NALGO"; A. W. CALE emphasises that the many cases bound to arise after nationalisation will call for considerable experience in matters solely electrical; and W. C. L. MARTIN points out that the Electricity Act provides for joint negotiation of "other matters of mutual interest" to the Boards and their staffs, including efficiency of the service, in addition to salaries and conditions, and only specialists in the electricity field will be able to undertake this.

These are the Experts

A. W. CALE, Chairman, London Power Branch.
J. F. CARTER, "Company" representative on Perth City Branch Executive.
R. A. COLMAN, Secretary, Cornwall Electric Power Branch.
C. W. DALE, Secretary, Northmet Branch.
R. C. FORSTER, Secretary, Electricity Supply Administrative Association.
A. E. KELL, Chairman, Bristol and District Branch.
W. C. L. MARTIN, Chairman, Shropshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire Power Co. Branch.
F. NEWMAN, Executive Member, West Ham Branch.

Changes in Machinery

3. Do you consider that any other changes are desirable in NALGO's machinery to enable it to cater effectively for its members in the electricity service?

Answers to this question are more divided, four calling for extensive changes, two seeking minor ones only, and one—R. C. FORSTER—seeing no need for any further changes. The changes suggested include:

> Appointment of one or more national electricity officers drawn from the industry to specialise in electricity branch problems; a separate journal for electricity members, or a special section of "L.G.S."—C. W. DALE.
>
> A regional committee of electricity branch members within each B.E.A. regional area, with a paid officer for each region specialising in electricity work; transfer of all electricity employees now in municipal or county branches to electricity branches—R. A. COLMAN.
>
> Creation of probably four separate divisions, each division having a specialist officer working under the district officer—A. W. CALE.
>
> Fostering of a more constructive and democratic spirit by holding more frequent branch meetings, rather than leaving many matters in the hands of branch executives—F. NEWMAN.

Salaries and Conditions

4. Do salaries and service conditions in your undertaking compare favourably with the conditions laid down in the local government "Charter"?

To this also answers were varied, although the majority report conditions not greatly inferior to, and in some cases better than, the Charter. Messrs. KELL, FORSTER, and NEWMAN work in municipal undertakings to which the Charter applies. Mr. DALE describes Northmet salaries as being now similar to the Charter scales, but conditions not so good—adding, significantly, that "a few months ago, salaries were definitely worse and, although the Northmet Company does not recognise this branch, we are satisfied that our members would not now be enjoying such conditions if they were not members of NALGO." He contends, however, that the local government Charter in its present form could not be applied to members of electricity branches: Northmet branch is preparing a modified form of it which could be adapted to suit all electricity members.

In the Cornwall Electric Power Company, while comparisons are difficult in the absence of published scales, salaries are probably lower than in local government by about £50 a year, but conditions are generally similar to the Charter. London Power Company rates and conditions are generally similar "with exceptions, especially in the lower grades."

In the Shropshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire Power Company, salaries and conditions are "as good as, if not better than" the Charter. Reporting this, Mr. MARTIN adds: "Let NALGO use the Charter as a draft if it desires, but forget it absolutely when negotiating for electricity staffs."

In striking contrast is the Grampian Electric Supply Co., where, Mr. CARTER discloses, salaries are much lower than in local government, with no standardised grading. Sick pay is subject to a maximum of three weeks and holidays of a fortnight (after one year's service); the staff work a 40½-hour week, and work is unfairly distributed in relation to salaries.

NAPSO or ANALGO?

5. Do you think that NALGO should change its name now that it caters for officers outside the local government service?

This question met with an almost unanimous reply, all, apart from Mr. KELL, who was undecided, agreeing that a change of name was not merely desirable but essential, Mr. CALE putting the case succinctly in the declaration that "names of such organisations should not provide for quibbles." But there was less unanimity about an alternative. Most popular choice was National Association of Public Service Officers (NAPSO), favoured by Messrs. DALE, COLMAN, MARTIN, and CARTER—with Mr. NEWMAN substituting "Union" for "Association" to give NUPSO. Recognising the prestige and association-value of the existing initials, Mr. FORSTER ingeniously suggests "National Association of *Loyal* Government Officers," and Mr. CALE "Association of National and Local Government Officers" (The "National" implying "Nationalised").

An Examinations Board?

6. Are you in favour of the formation, after nationalisation, of an examinations board for officers of the electricity service, and the establishment of a promotion bar?

All supported this suggestion, but most with qualifications clearly influenced by the difficulties and fears which have beset local government officers. Thus, Mr. DALE wants to incorporate safeguards for existing staff; Mr. KELL would postpone it for three years; Mr. COLMAN wants to have all gradings fixed before it is established, and to exempt all with more than ten years' service from the examination bar; Mr. CALE thinks it may be "many years before functions of individuals can be clarified and lined-up"—although, after that, he believes that "examinations carefully set to cover subjects relating to the lined-up functions, and grouped, could provide for a promotion bar"; and Mr. MARTIN would prefer to await the results of nationalisation.

Administrators Must Bring Humanity into the Nationalised Hospital

By L. S. RICHARDSON

THE nationalisation of the hospital service next year provides an opportunity for long-overdue reforms in administration. In this article, Mr. Richardson, who is deputy steward of St. James's Hospital, Leeds, outlines some changes he would like to see. We shall welcome the views of other members in the hospital service.

TO the hospital officer, the building in which he spends his days (and sometimes nights) becomes, in time, so much a part of his existence that he is surprised when someone from the "outer world" remarks that there is a "smell" peculiar to it. He has become so much a part of the machine that he is oblivious to it—and he is in danger of becoming equally oblivious to the point of view of the patient, the human element, consideration of which is essential to good administration. To the patient, hospital is an awe-inspiring place, in which many people ask pertinent (and what may sometimes seem impertinent) questions, do unpleasant things to him, fill up numerous forms, and attend to a variety of administrative tasks that he is too worried or too ill to understand.

The administrative officer's job is to smooth away the patient's worries and to ensure that the efficiency of the medical service is not impaired by lax organisation. In a hospital, effective administration is almost as important as medicine and surgery.

Receiving the Patient

Perhaps its most important aspect is the impression it makes on a patient. To-day, although almoners are trained in social welfare work, many other officers with whom the patient comes into contact are incapable of appreciating Florence Nightingale's spirit of service to the suffering, still less of interpreting it. A hospital's reputation is built on its ability to offer the patient sympathetic understanding, as well as medical and surgical treatment.

For this reason, careful thought must be given to the patient's reception. The porter-receptionist and the clerks in the out patients' department, his first contact with the hospital, must show courtesy, efficiency, patience, and good humour. The receptionist should not be called upon to do more than four hours at a stretch—the most ready smile can seem a little synthetic after this time. The day of the brusque lodge porter who subjected the patient to a rigorous cross-examination on arrival and departure is, happily, going, though it has not yet gone : there is no place for him in the new service. Spacious receiving wards with sufficient examination rooms are essential so that the patient may be examined and sent to the appropriate ward without delay.

Waiting Means Worrying

The same scrupulous attention to the patient's welfare must be observed in the out-patients' department. There, to-day, a patient may often have to wait long hours in a bare and austerely-furnished hall before, and often during, treatment, disturbed by urgent thoughts of lost time, lost income, or of youngsters returning from school to find the house shut and mother absent.

Many attempts have been made to fix appointments for out patients—but few such schemes have worked well. Their failure is not wholly the fault of the administrator, nor can an over-worked medical staff be tied to a strict time-table. The solution is adequate consulting rooms so that the patient can be certain of a consultation at the appointed time, with a doctor not harassed by over-work. To help the receptionist work quickly and efficiently, she should be equipped with a modern filing system of patients' case-papers arranged alphabetically. Numbering case-papers is useless, since in practice the only thing a patient is likely to remember accurately is his name. While the patient waits for his appointment, he might be cheered with music from the amplifier system. When the doctor is ready to see him, his name and the number of the consulting room in which he will be examined, could be flashed on to a fluorescent screen. Unhurried calm and quiet, ordered service, should be the aim.

Here is a clean, light waiting-room for out-patients. They can get a cup of tea at the far end. But why no easy chairs nor magazines ?

Is this the way to eliminate dreary waiting ? It looks efficient and, though difficult to work, may, with adequate consulting rooms and efficient organisation, be made to do so.

Light, airy buildings are the best antidote to depression and the greatest enemy to germs. Although we may not be able to pull down and remodel the worst of our hospitals, we should, to-day, make every effort to make the best of poor buildings with pleasing decoration.

Better-Served Food

Equally urgent is the improvement of the way in which food is served to patients. Although catering officers and other experts may plan diets with infinite care, the food when served is often only half-warm and neither attractively nor daintily prepared. To-morrow's hospital must have first-class kitchens and cooks, and must be able to serve food hot, fresh, and attractively.

Sweeping changes are necessary before the right kind of women will be attracted to nursing in adequate numbers. The hospital is the nurse's home, but until she is made to feel at home there, no reform can succeed. More pay touches only the fringe of the problem. A remedy must be found for the disadvantages of communal living ; the lack of privacy ; irritating restrictions on personal freedom ; and the survival of rules, once designed to check slovenliness, but now outgrown. The new health service will, next year, put the finest brains in science and medicine at the service of the poorest patient, but these will be robbed of their effect unless we tackle vital reforms now.

A NALGO Playwright

DOREEN SIMPSON, development officer at **Leamington Spa** (and branch public relations officer), saw her second play, "The Sparks Fly Upwards," given a successful try-out by a West End company at the Q Theatre last month. Based on the conflict between two councillors—a young industrialist, fired with enthusiasm for a community centre, and a woman doctor who believes that homes must come before amenities—all the action takes place in and around the Town Hall and most of the characters, all excellently drawn, are councillors or officers. There is a dramatic council meeting, some effective comedy, and the conflict is happily resolved to the sound of marriage bells. There are hopes of both West End and provincial productions—and the play should have special appeal to NALGO dramatic societies.

Chief Officers Cannot Afford To-day to Stand Outside NALGO

By the General Secretary, J. H. WARREN, M.A., D.P.A.

NALGO has special claims upon Chief Officers and offers them unique services of which they will stand increasingly in need, declares Mr. Warren in this article, abridged from a paper to the Society of Town Clerks some time ago. What he says about chiefs in the local government service applies also to chiefs in the public utility services for whose interests NALGO can, and does, also appropriately cater.

IN two respects NALGO is unique as an occupational organisation and, in both of them, it reveals itself as a body which can properly include and represent the chief officers of the local government service.

No similar organisation in the world undertakes such extensive and varied services for its members. In addition to the vast field of activity involved in its primary function of dealing with the service conditions of local government officers, it undertakes an unusually wide range of "Friendly Society" work, including a Benevolent and Orphan Fund dispensing about £25,000 a year; an insurance ancillary, transacting all classes of insurance, whose assets stand at about £1,000,000; a Provident ancillary providing benefits for sickness and hospital and nursing-home expenses, with assets of about £400,000; a Building Society with assets of nearly £5,000,000; two holiday camps; two convalescent homes; and a private hotel.

A Pioneer in Education

Not all of these "special activities," as we call them, will make a strong appeal to chief officers. What should do so—and herein lies the first unique element in NALGO's work—is what it does beyond the sphere of protection and Friendly Society provision. First, is its work in education and training. The service would not have been as well trained as it is to-day if NALGO had not led the way to better standards. NALGO has been no enemy, and often a friend, to the professional bodies which confer the basic qualifications for higher office; but it has asked even the highly qualified professional officer for something more, and has encouraged the establishment of degrees and diplomas designed to reinforce the position of chief officers as administrators.

For staffs at intermediate level in highly specialised subjects for which facilities for tuition are inadequate or non-existent, it has developed its own correspondence institute.

It has sought and won, under the National Charter, a proper standard of education and competitive tests for recruits to the service. At all levels of study, high and low, it has maintained contacts with teaching bodies, provided summer and week-end schools, and assisted adult education.

Courtesy and Service

No less unique has been its contribution to the study of relations between local authorities and citizens—the organisation of local government exhibitions, and the provision of assistance, in many forms, to local authorities in the conduct of information and publicity services. All such work has deepened public appreciation of the local government service and of the difficult work and heavy responsibilities of the chief officer. Hardly less beneficial to public and service—including morale and discipline—has been NALGO's steady insistence that every local government officer can be an ambassador for local government in his daily work, and that ideals of courtesy and service are as necessary in the junior as in the senior officer. NALGO's activities in education and public relations alone demonstrate that it approaches its work with public spirit—not as a mere agency of grab—and considers the efficiency and training of an officer to be as much its concern as negotiations for better service conditions.

Secondly, NALGO is unique in the wide and comprehensive basis of its membership. It enrols local government officers of every profession, occupation, grade, and degree, from the town clerk or clerk of the county council to the newly appointed junior (though not those classed as "manual workers").

One Union For All

There is thus one comprehensive union for all local government officers, a situation in marked contrast to that in the civil service. Such a comprehensive membership was envisaged from the start by NALGO's pioneers. There was nothing shocking to Sir Herbert Blain (with Sir Homewood Crawford, a founder of the Association) in the idea that chief officers should be members of the same Association as their subordinates. Chief officers joined from the start, and the great majority are now members. According to a recent analysis, membership includes nearly 50 per cent. of clerks to county councils, about 80 per cent. of town clerks and clerks to district councils, and a slightly higher percentage of other chief officers, such as treasurers, engineers, and education officers. Broadly, between 80 and 90 per cent. of the chief officers who stand round the clerk to the authority, forming the uppermost layer in the local government hierarchy, are members of the Association.

A Principle with Profit

These figures make it clear that chief officers have seen no constitutional impediment to joining the Association, but that, on the contrary, they have felt it both right and proper to show solidarity with their subordinate colleagues and, at the same time, have themselves derived special benefit from it.

NALGO has not, of course, concerned itself with their remuneration in the same way as it has done for subordinate staff, by establishing scales and gradings through the machinery of Whitley councils. Hitherto, chief officers have not desired parallel action for themselves, but nevertheless the Association's efforts have had beneficial effect upon their standards, and chief officers have themselves come to NALGO for assistance on such matters. Moreover, though the Charter, negotiated by NALGO, relates only to employees with salaries below £700, the increases it brought about within that figure have secured substantial, indeed almost corresponding, changes in chief officers' salaries—including those of clerks.

There have been numerous occasions—more numerous than some town clerks think—when chief officers, including town clerks, have appealed to the provincial councils, on NALGO's advice, and secured greatly improved salaries with the Association's support. Further, on several occasions, NALGO has successfully resorted to arbitration in support of improved standards for chief officers. Again, NALGO's action in the economy campaign of 1931 was of particular benefit to chief officers.

On the whole, however, NALGO's most valuable work for chief officers has lain in the field of parliamentary work and legal protection. Superannuation is enjoyed by all officers solely by virtue of NALGO's efforts. It may also claim credit for working out the standard provisions for compensation on loss of office, a matter in which it is always vigilant and which involves its legal officers in attention to every piece of Parliamentary legislation. In all such matters, chief officers have more to lose than their subordinates. If NALGO did not safeguard their interests, I do not know who *would*, for it is largely beyond the resources of any single professional organisation catering for town clerks, treasurers, engineers, or other chief officers.

In the future, I suggest, chief officers will stand more and more in need of the Association's support. These are times of great social strain, and chief officers of local authorities are particularly exposed by their duties to the social, economic, political, and class frictions of the age. Were I still a chief officer, I should not feel very comfortable, whatever my faith in my abilities or however clear my conscience, were there not some body, such as NALGO, to defend me against unjust attack and innocent or malicious misrepresentation or to watch over the effect on local government officers of to-day's social, economic, and legislative changes. There are some things, thought secure up to the present, for which we may yet have to fight. This would, in fact, have happened in the last twelve months on superannuation and compensation if NALGO had not been at work. I believe it will need all NALGO's efforts to preserve in the further changes to come the principles and precedents already won.

Recognised Scales Now?

Some chief officers now take the view that the establishment of recognised scales will better serve their interests, and although NALGO has in the past thought there was much to be said for retaining one comprehensive joint council for all officers—senior and junior alike—in the service, it is not committed to this view, but will seek representation on any new council should one be set up.

NALGO both desires and is able to represent and support chief officers. It recognises the special position of the Society of Town Clerks and similar professional bodies, and does not wish to submerge the interests or status of such groups. Its policy is to *remain* an Association with a diversity of groups joined in one spirit and one bond. We should stultify our aims, defeat our interests, and dissipate our strength, if the service broke up into entirely separate and independent groups, each trying to plough its own furrow.

Pension Won for Widow

THERE is a significant sequel to last month's account of NALGO's prolonged wrangle with the Ministry of Pensions, at the end of which it recovered £100 disability pension arrears for the widow of a member who died from heart failure after his discharge from the Army as unfit. The widow is now receiving from the Ministry a pension of £3 4s. 6d. a week *in her own right*. She applied for it on the Association's advice.

N.E.C. Rejects Employers' Consolidation Offer—But Talks Go On

STAFF side proposals for consolidation of Charter salary scales with cost-of-living bonus, designed to effect a general increase in remuneration, to make specific improvements in the General Division scale and the "weighting" for London, and to secure equal rates for women with men, came before the National Joint Council on October 23.

When these proposals were before the N.J.C. executive, on October 7, the employers' side had replied by offering consolidation at existing rates of salary and bonus, with improved salaries in the General Division up to the age of 20. At a special meeting on October 11, the N.E.C. decided to reject this offer and to press for negotiations to continue.

At the meeting of the full council on October 23, the staff side impressed on the employers the serious discontent prevailing in the service on the question and the delay in arriving at a settlement. The employers eventually accepted a motion of the staff side that negotiations should continue in the executive committee, that the executive should meet within about 28 days, and that a meeting of the full council should follow as soon as practicable thereafter.

The meeting of the executive was later fixed for November 26—after this issue had gone to press.

Other matters dealt with at the meeting of the N.J.C. included :

Motor Car Allowances—A scheme was approved providing for a mileage rate, based on size of car, with a guaranteed minimum annual payment, together with arrangements for assisted purchase of cars. The new mileage rate will not take effect until the basic petrol ration has been restored, but in the meantime the council approved the following temporary scheme :

Size of Car	*Minimum Payment P.A.*	*Mileage Rate (additional)*
	£	d.
Up to 8 h.p. or 1,014 c.c. ..	84	1½
8 h.p. (1,014 c.c.)—10 h.p. (1,214 c.c.)	96	1¾
Over 10 h.p. (1,214 c.c.) ..	108	2

The N.J.C. is also informing local authorities that, in its view, they should not make it a condition of appointment that officers on low salaries must provide a car at their own cost.

Appeals—Paragraph 93 of the Charter was amended to provide that :

(i) Notice of appeal to a local authority shall be given within three months of the date on which an officer is notified by the employing authority of the grading of his or her post ; and

(ii) Notice of appeal to a provincial council shall be given within three months of the date on which an officer is notified of the decision of the employing authority on an original appeal ; provided that when the notifications referred to in (i) and (ii) above have been given in either case before October 31, 1947, the three months' time limit shall not commence to run before November 1, 1947.

Leave for Examinations—It was agreed that leave of absence without loss of salary shall be granted to officers for the purpose of sitting for examinations applicable to the local government service.

Hospital and Institution Officers—It was agreed that Para. 41 of the Charter (providing for a "carry-over") shall not apply in determining the salaries fixed by the National Council for hospital stewards and superintendents and matrons of children's homes.

Part-time staff working less than 38 hours a week—It was agreed that officers working regularly less than 38 hours a week shall be graded within the salary scales and paid such proportion of the scale salaries as their working hours bear to 38 hours a week.

Officers temporarily undertaking additional duties—It was agreed that :

(a) An officer who is called upon, by reason of illness or leave of other officers, to perform duties outside the scope of the post he occupies, is not entitled to additional remuneration.

(b) An officer who is called upon to occupy temporarily a higher graded post in circumstances other than those referred to in (a) is entitled to the salary attaching to the higher post during such time as he occupies the post.

Service in Auxiliary Forces—It was agreed that :

(a) The National Council endorses the principle that volunteer members of the non-regular forces who attend summer camps should not be compelled to forego their leave either in whole or in part but should be granted leave additional to their normal annual leave.

(b) Local authorities be recommended to endorse the principle contained in (a) above and to adopt the following :

To provide that officers who volunteer for service in the auxiliary forces and attend an annual training camp shall be granted, if their normal entitlement is three weeks or less, the full fortnight required for annual camp as additional paid leave ; and that officers with a higher leave entitlement shall be granted one week's additional leave for annual camp and shall be free to choose whether the second week shall count as unpaid leave additional to their normal entitlement or as part of their normal leave with pay.

The above recommendation does not apply to compulsory service in the auxiliary forces.

Hope of Early Agreement on the Formation Of Electricity J.I.C.

FURTHER progress towards the setting up of joint negotiating machinery for the electricity supply industry was made last month at a conference between the British Electricity Authority and the Employees' National Committee representing local authority chief engineers, technical staff, manual workers, and administrative and clerical workers.

Lord Citrine, chairman of the B.E.A., presided over a friendly discussion which will, it is hoped, lead to early agreement on the machinery to be established. Before that can be concluded, however, it is necessary to consult with Area Boards, but this cannot take place until the Boards are established. In the meantime, informal discussions will be continued, so that there will be no delay in putting proposals before the Boards as soon as they are appointed, and a preliminary discussion between representatives of the B.E.A. and the trade unions concerned—including N A L G O—is to be held on December 1.

The Employees' National Committee, which was set up before the Electricity Bill was published, consisted at first of representatives of the workers' side of the National J.I.C. (which dealt with manual workers) and the staff side of the National Joint Board (which dealt with technical staff). Later it was enlarged to include the Associated Municipal Electrical Engineers, and at a conference on October 13 was further enlarged to include clerical staffs.

It is now a committee of 15 on which N A L G O has two seats, held by J. E. N. DAVIS, chief organisation officer (who has been elected vice-chairman of the committee) and W. C. ANDERSON, legal officer. Other unions represented include, in addition to the A.M.E.E., the Electrical Power Engineers' Association, Transport and General Workers' Union, Electrical Trades Union, National Union of General and Municipal Workers, Amalgamated Engineering Union, National Union of Enginemen, Firemen, Mechanics, and Electrical Workers, and Clerical and Administrative Workers' Union. The only group of electricity employees not yet represented on it are the engineers of company undertakings. It is now recognised by the B.E.A. as the only body competent to speak for all sections of the electricity supply industry. Matters with which it will deal include joint negotiating machinery, maintenance of superannuation rights, training of new entrants, and compensation for loss of office.

In view of a misapprehension which appears to exist among some company administrative and supervisory officers that N A L G O does not cater for officers with salaries over £700 a year, it is emphasised that the Association will represent *all* administrative officers in the electricity service.

Interim Recognition Sought

N A L G O is also seeking interim arrangements under which the power companies will recognise and negotiate with the unions of which their employees are members.

Discussions have been going on for some time with the Incorporated Association of Electric Power Companies. This body has now referred the question to the B.E.A., and has informed N A L G O that, in view of this, it would be out of order for it to recognise the Association without the consent of the B.E.A. N A L G O has therefore approached the B.E.A., but at the time of going to press had not had its reply.

Lord Citrine's Assurance

Lord Citrine, has given an assurance that the B.E.A. will endeavour, as far as possible, to secure that the employees will not be exposed to breaks in employment or a worsening of conditions when the undertakings pass to public ownership.

"Changes, consequent upon reorganisation of the industry, are bound to come," he added : "the Minister has promised that full consultation will take place with the trade unions before the regulations provided for in the Act are actually made."

BRISTOL CALLS FOR "NOT LESS THAN £100" BONUS

STRONG criticism of the N.E.C. and of the employers' side of the National Joint Council was expressed at a special general meeting of Bristol and district branch called on October 17 to protest against the delay in obtaining an increase in the cost of living bonus.

J. E. N. DAVIS, the Association's chief organisation officer, explained at length the difficulties facing the staff side in their negotiations in the J.I.C., but the meeting unanimously adopted the following resolution :

"This Special General Meeting of the Bristol and District Branch of N A L G O declares that the present cost of living bonus bears no relation to the present cost of living ; that consequently the present salary scale does not permit our members to enjoy a standard of living commensurate with that which could reasonably be expected by local government officers ; and that it bears particularly heavily on the young men who are trying to build a home and who are being compelled to fall back on their rapidly diminishing Service gratuities.

"It welcomes the recent statement of the S.W. district committee expressing extreme dissatisfaction with the present stage of negotiations and calling on the N.E.C. to negotiate for a figure in keeping with the actual cost of living and at a level not less than £100.

"It observes that the general clerical class of the civil service has recently received an increase of £20, even after consolidation at a level higher than that enjoyed by local government officers, and charges the employers' side of the National Joint Council with having adopted an entirely unreasonable attitude and of appearing to be evading any effective action by means of a deliberate policy of delay.

"It notices also that wholesale prices have risen 5 per cent in the first six months of this year, that profits are still rising, and rejects the view that wages should be frozen as long as there is no control over profit and price levels.

"Therefore, whilst recognising the difficulties of the present economic situation, it calls on the N.E.C. to refuse under any circumstances to consolidate at the present level and seriously to consider the advisability of referring the matter to arbitration if the employers maintain their present attitude."

The meeting also decided to send copies of the resolution to the staff side of the N.J.C., to all branches with more than 300 members, and to issue a statement to the national and local Press expressing extreme dissatisfaction with the present situation and rejecting the concept that wages must be frozen as long as prices and profits continue to rise.

N.E.C. COMMITTEES

Gas Unions' Pact : J.I.C.s for Health and Water Staffs : Electricity Pensions

A "NO-POACHING" agreement between N A L G O and other unions covering gas employees, pension regulations for electricity officers after nationalisation, and negotiations on Whitley machinery for the national health service and for water company officers, were among many matters before the committees of the National Executive Council of N A L G O when it met on October 11.

It was reported that a conference of representatives of N A L G O, the British Gas Staff Association, and the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, had agreed to invite all the trade unions which will be represented on the proposed National Joint Council for Gas Staffs to subscribe to the following principles, designed to lead to complete co-operation between them :

Propaganda derogatory to other trade unions shall be withdrawn, but a trade union shall not be debarred from expressing opinions as to the best form of trade unionism for gas staffs ;

No trade union shall accept into membership a member of another trade union, or an employee who has been a member of another trade union within the previous three months, without inquiry and agreement, such agreement not to be unreasonably withheld ;

Where one trade union has as members the majority of employees at any gas undertaking, another trade union shall not commence organising activities unless by arrangement with that union ;

In the event of a dispute arising out of the foregoing, it shall be referred to the staff side for determination.

Whitleyism and National Health Service—As we recorded last month, the Minister of Health has submitted to interested organisations proposals for a National Joint Council for all employees of the new National Health Service in England, Wales, and Scotland, together with nine Functional Councils, each of which will deal with the salaries of a well-defined group of employees, and with such service conditions as affect them alone. Separate conferences are being held with representatives of such groups, and N A L G O has now been invited to be represented at six of these—dealing respectively with administrative and clerical staffs, nurses and midwives, medical staffs, dentists, other professional staffs, and technical staffs.

J.I.C. for Water Company Officers—The Association has agreed in principle to the establishment of a National Joint Council for the officers of water companies and will take the necessary action at the appropriate time.

Pensions of Electricity Officers—The law and parliamentary committee agreed to ask the Minister of Fuel and Power to include the following points in the pensions regulations which he is to make under Section 54 of the Electricity Act, 1947 :

All superannuation rights of transferred employees to be preserved ;

Transferred employees to have the right to elect whether to become subject to the provisions of the new scheme, or to remain subject to their existing schemes ; and

Persons who are not taken into the employment of an Electricity Board but who are already entitled to a superannuation allowance, to have their rights preserved.

The committee further agreed to support any proposal made that the compensation provisions of the Local Government Act, 1933, should be applied and, failing those, provisions as near as possible to the 1933 Act code.

Family Allowances—The law and parliamentary committee decided to inform the Minister of National Insurance of the Conference resolution declaring that the existing rate of family allowances was totally inadequate, and calling for a higher rate, including provision for the first child.

SERVICE CONDITIONS

Other matters dealt with by the committees included :

References to National Joint Council

The following three matters were referred to the staff side :

Provincial Weighting—An instruction to urge that half the "weighting" for London be paid in Bristol, Birmingham, Cardiff, Leeds, Liverpool (including Birkenhead and Bootle), Manchester (including Salford), Newcastle (including Gateshead), and Sheffield, where a similar differentiation applies to civil servants.

Recognition of Examination Successes—A request that the N.J.C. inform local authorities that, pending its revision, the list of examinations set out in Appendix B of the Charter should not be regarded as exclusive.

Medical Examination of Disabled Ex-Servicemen—A request that the N.J.C., reaffirm to local authorities its resolution of November 30, 1945, asking provincial councils to recommend all

"Lively meeting, eh ?"

authorities to give sympathetic consideration to applications from ex-servicemen not up to normal health standards for superannuation purposes whose unfitness is due to war service.

Testimonials—An instruction to urge endorsement of the Association's policy that, when advertising vacancies, local authorities should ask for names of referees instead of testimonials.

Protecting Juniors on Call-up

Reports received by the committee included the following :

National Service Act—Arising out of complaints that some local authorities were appointing junior officers liable to call-up for national service to temporary posts, the legal officer reported on the legal protection available.

Section 12 of the National Service Act, 1947, extends the provisions of the Reinstatement in Civil Employment Act, 1944, to persons who enter upon a period of whole-time service in the armed Forces in consequence of the Act, but goes a little further than the 1944 Act by providing that, where the period of employment is less than thirteen weeks, the reinstatement period shall be thirteen weeks.

Section 13 of the 1947 Act prohibits dismissal of employees by reason of their liability for service. If the employer terminates the employment without the employee's consent before the date on which the employee is required to comply with an enlistment notice and does so solely or mainly by reason of any duties or liabilities which the employee is or may become liable to perform under the Act, the employer is guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding £50. The court may order him to pay to the employee as compensation a sum not exceeding five weeks' remuneration.

Officers Transferred to National Agricultural Advisory Service—Despite the assurances which had been given to applicants for appointments in the Advisory Service, those transferred had found their remuneration reduced by 5 per cent., the amount previously deducted for superannuation. In response to protests by N A L G O, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has decided that officers transferred to incremental scales shall retain their gross pre-transfer salaries on a "mark-time" basis against the 5 per cent. cut.

Catering Officers—In response to an inquiry by N A L G O, the Catering Wages Commission has stated that workers employed by local authorities in a catering undertaking at an unlicensed establishment or workers' hostel will be subject to statutory wage regulating machinery, but may remain within the scope of the National Joint Council. The rates fixed by a wages council are statutory minima and do not preclude the workers concerned from receiving the benefit of higher rates or improved conditions negotiated on their behalf by a voluntary wage negotiating body.

Day Nursery Staffs—Proposals for the regulation of pay and conditions of staff of day nurseries have been drawn up by the Rushcliffe Committee and referred to various bodies before being circulated to local authorities.

Inadequate Salaries—The Joint Consultative Committee, composed of representatives of N A L G O and the sectional and professional societies of local government officers, has passed a resolution requesting its constituent organisations to continue to urge their members not to apply for posts advertised at inadequate salaries.

Medical Laboratory Technicians—The first meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee (Medical Laboratory Technicians) agreed to inform all employing authorities that the new scale increasing salaries of technicians by £50 p.a. should apply from April 1, 1947. The staff side proposals for revised salary rates are to be considered at the next meeting of the committee.

Recruitment and Training of Nurses—On the invitation of the Minister of Health, the women's services sub-committee of the N.E.C. is preparing a statement of views on the report of the Working Party on the recruitment and training of nurses.

Equal Pay—The women's services sub-committee, endorsing the 1947 Conference resolution on equal pay, called on the N.E.C. to make the most strenuous efforts to secure its adoption throughout the local government service.

Promotion of Education Department Staff—The long-standing claim of officers in education departments that they should be considered for appointment to administrative posts although lacking teaching experience has been further considered at a conference between N A L G O and the Association of Education Officers. Conclusions were deferred, pending further inquiries.

EDUCATION

Summer Schools—Schools are to be held next year at Oriel College, Oxford, and St. Andrew's University.

Grants to Universities—The usual grants of £50 are to be made to universities and university colleges arranging courses for a degree or diploma in public administration, and to the Joint University Council for Social Studies and Public Administration.

International Exchange of Students—In furtherance of its policy of encouraging the exchange of local government officers with their opposite numbers in other countries, the Association is to apply for membership of the Educational Interchange Council, formed recently under the presidency of Lord Lindsay of Birker, to co-ordinate such exchanges.

Scholarships—Thirteen £30 scholarships have been awarded to enable the holders to prepare for degrees or diplomas in public administration.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

New Exhibition—A plan for a new travelling exhibition prepared by the Metropolitan district public relations sub-committee, designed to show, in the most attractive manner possible, and with the aid of pictures, models, diagrams, and living displays, the services provided by local government for the citizen, was approved in principle and is to be submitted to the N.E.C. If approved, the exhibition would be offered to local authorities on a weekly rental basis.

Local Government Education—The National Committee for Visual Aids, set up by the Ministry of Education, has invited N A L G O to submit proposals for visual aids—films, film-strip, slides, pictures, charts, diagrams, models, illustrated books, and similar material—dealing with local government, for use in schools and in adolescent and adult education. A sub committee has been appointed to prepare suggestions.

Public Assistance Staffs—In fulfilment of the Conference resolution urging the N.E.C. to engage in propaganda to further the demand that staffs of public assistance committees be given prior claim to transfer to posts under the new body which is to take over their work, the committee is to undertake publicity designed to bring to the notice of the new Boards and of the public the value of the work done by public assistance staffs, and to reply to criticism of the service.

Mine is thine!

BY "TOBIAS"

"MINE," said our ex-Captain Sackbutt heavily, "is definitely thine."

Young Betty giggled, but the rest of us remained immersed in calculations (on which he had been working late for the past month) as to the amount of extra work which would be involved if gas and electricity rationing were introduced in our town.

Rufus stuck to the point he had been making. "What we need to liven us up in NALGO," he said, "are some Visits."

By this, apparently, he did not mean those gatherings of a few local government officers and their wives at the home of one of the couples, where, after a meal which will put the host and hostess on the starvation list for a week, it is found that somebody doesn't know a red spade from a black diamond, and somebody else is stone-deaf. So all that can be done by way of entertainment is for the boys" to get into a corner and talk about the office, while the "girls" gather round where the fire would be if there were one, and talk about What the Butcher Said.

No, Rufus wanted us to go and see the local newspaper office, invade the town's picture gallery, or go down a mine. "You people sitting in the office all day," he said, "simply don't know how the other half lives."

"A visit to a mine," persisted Rufus, "would broaden your minds—and you could probably sneak a pocketful of coal."

If he'd said *Uranium* in the United Nations Assembly, he couldn't have aroused more interest.

"Coal!" "Now you're talking!" "When do we start, Rufus?"

So one evening we assembled at a local colliery, Daffy showing a queer bustle effect at that part of her person where a bustle is normally supposed to be worn.

"It's the office coal-scuttle," she whispered to me. "I thought bulging pockets would be *so* unspicuous."

Rufus, surprisingly, was the first casualty. As we came out of the cage, he stood aside with a little shudder. "Claustrophobia," he said, covering his eyes theatrically with one hand, while the other waved us on into the mine. "Had it ever since I was a kid."

"Couldn't he have remembered that before he dragged us fifteen hundred feet below ground?" grumbled George. But, as the coal in some wagons near us looked a bit slatey, we went on in the hope of a better quality.

"Gee, I'd hate to work here," said Daffy, as we passed a piece of electrical plant on which was prominently displayed a notice about how to treat electric shock—the shockee being referred to in businesslike fashion as "the body."

"I'll bet you would," I answered, seeing another notice, this time chalked on the wall of the passage: "Target 528 tons."

"Christopher Columbus!" George, coming back to see what the delay was about, had tripped over a projecting pipe. His ankle proved to be sprained, and there was nothing for it but to get him back to pit bottom. Luckily, Daffy, too, declared that nothing would induce her to go any further and, having got George wedged nicely into the coal-scuttle, which was of the two-handled type, she and the elderly miner contrived to carry him back the way we had come. Weeks afterwards, George was still complaining that his visit to a mine had left its mark.

Sackbutt, Betty, and I went on with the remaining miner. An unusual silence came over us as we continued our dusty hike into the depths of the earth. A drop of water to the right, a faint indescribable noise to the left, and we were reduced to the jelly-like state of a progressive film actor appearing before the Un-American Activities Committee.

When at last we reached the coal face, our miner invited us to crawl along the narrow passage where men take their picks and actually bring down the stuff that used to keep the home fires burning.

"We shan't bother, thanks——" Sackbutt and I began. But young Betty was already on the ground, creeping forward with a Commando stomach-march. Sackbutt only just got in ahead of her, and I had to follow.

Darkness and dust assailed me, as Betty's heels very nearly did. The roof, inches above my head, bulged threateningly with every movement of my lamp. Then the earth split with a stupendous roar. My last coherent thought as I prepared to go down into a bottomless chasm, with the world piling in hunks on top of me, was resentment that George would get back alive to step into my shoes at the office.

Some time after the miner had stopped the pneumatic pick and the conveyor belt which he had put into noisy action simultaneously for our benefit, we came up in the cage to find Rufus, George, and Daffy munching enormous sandwiches and drinking tea in the mine canteen.

"I shall write to the papers," mumbled Rufus, his mouth full, "about Our Miners' Life of Luxury. Whaddyou say, boys?"

For the moment we had nothing to say, but some time later the black-faced minstrel, Sackbutt, was heard to announce that if he were offered a thousand a year to be a miner he'd still choose the General Division with or without the cost-of-living bonus.

And the worst of it was we forgot to bring up any coal.

at random —— by "hyperion"

Crisis Philosophy

A Negro maid philosophises: "Trouble is so high you can't climb over it, so wide you can't walk round it, so deep you can't dig under it, so I be doggoned iffn de only way to beat it isn' to duck yo haid an' wade right through."

Hint for Regional Hospital Board

A West Virginia county conducted a contest to name a new county hospital. The prize: a free appendectomy.

Fashion Note

"At 7.25 p.m. prompt, the Mayor and Mayoress will proceed to the Mayor's Parlour and disrobe, except for chains."—*Programme for borough ceremony.*

Good News for Fathers

People who have never married have never really lived. (People who have married and had no children have only half lived. People who have had one child only are a long way from the crown of human life.) Old age with nothing to look back upon, nothing to lean upon, is poor stuff as compared with the old age that renews its youth and life and interests in its children and grandchildren. Ask a few lonely old people going out with the tide.—*From "Last Leaves," by Stephen Leacock.*

Why Men Dread It?

It isn't tying himself to one woman that a man dreads when he thinks of marrying, it's separating himself from all the others.—*Helen Rowland.*

Brevities

Most of the nice things in life are either illegal or immoral—or fattening.—*Overheard in London.*

"Success is the art of making more money to meet obligations you wouldn't have if you didn't make so much money."—*Ladies' Home Journal.*

Cost of Living

It isn't so hard to live on a small salary if you don't spend too much money in trying to keep it secret.

Two Clerihews

Miss Mae West
Is one of the best.
I would rather not
Say the best what.—E. W. Fordham.

Bring me a lot
Of saumon fumee en cocotte
Failing the saumon fumee
Cocotte will do me.—Nicolas Bentley.

Elusive

"I like the shy, demure type myself. You know, the kind you have to whistle at twice."—*Overheard in barracks.*

Pardon the Compliment

Talking about sneezing and nose blowing, have you ever thought about the belch? I had not, till I found that the Turks consider belching the best compliment you can pay your host after a good dinner, and none of the Eastern European peoples attempt to hide this natural reaction to a full stomach. I have been paying this compliment for the last five years and apart from its use as a social accomplishment, it is most satisfying to know that you can belch loudly and openly without upsetting your neighbours.—*Kenneth Young in a B.B.C. talk.*

Rejection Made Easy

"If only the motorists would state their claims on the RMS 1 form—and nothing more—we could save time and trouble in turning them down."—*Daily Express.*

READERS' FORUM

Should We Refer Bonus Dispute to Arbitration?

We award the prize of 10s. 6d. for this month's best letter to "CASEBY" for an ably presented review of the cost-of-living bonus question.

NALGO has been negotiating since last year, through the National Joint Council, for a revision of the present cost-of-living bonus of £59 16s. operative since January 1, 1945. When the Charter was approved at the end of 1945, the staff side agreed to refrain for twelve months from asking for an increase in the bonus, on the ground that, without such an undertaking, the employers would not have agreed to the Charter salary scales. In the light of subsequent events, it seems that, even then, the employers had determined what would be their answer to a demand for any increase. The staff side was strongly criticised at Conference for giving this undertaking and the criticism has been justified by events.

At the end of 1946, and after the twelve months' truce, NALGO applied for an increased bonus. After some preliminary skirmishing in the N.J.C. and its executive committee, the employers rejected the application but agreed to consider proposals for consolidating bonus with salary, although they would give no undertaking that this would operate from April 1 this year—12 months after the Charter. The staff side submitted its proposals and the employers have now replied that they will only agree to a settlement on consolidation which provides for no increase in the bonus generally, but only for a slight alteration in the lower grades of the general division. With respect, I suggest that they had decided this eighteen months ago and have taken advantage of the staff's good will to shelve the question. Now, the N.J.C. has given its executive committee a month for further discussion and negotiation. The result may, therefore, be known by the middle of this month.

If agreement is not reached—and this seems probable—the next step is the declaration of a dispute and the submission of a case for arbitration. Since, before a decision on this step is reached, a mandate may be sought, we should understand what we are talking about.

The employers claim that the Charter represented a considerable advance over 1939 in the level of remuneration of the service generally. They quote impressive details of the cost to the the rates of implementing the Charter. Those facts are not disputed but it must be answered, in fairness, that the general level of remuneration in 1939 was low and a large part of the increase, serving merely to make up inequality with comparable professions, was, to that extent, not a gift but payment due.

The introduction to the Charter in "L.G.S." stated that the salary scales "have been fixed after considering existing scales in comparison with rates of remuneration in comparable occupations and after reviewing changes in remuneration generally." The only basis of argument in our present problem is not a reference to 1939, therefore, but an examination of (a) what has happened in comparable professions in the meantime, (b) what is happening in the country generally in regard to wages, and (c) to what extent the cost of living has *in fact* and not *in relation to the official index*, increased since the bonus was last fixed.

We know that the general trend of wages is upward and that the T.U.C., in the absence of any wages policy from the Government, sees no reason to do its part to halt the rise. There can be no argument that the cost of living has materially increased both since the bonus was last fixed and since the Charter was promulgated. The civil service later consolidated at a higher figure and has since had grading increases. Insurance officials, too, have had a "charter." This spiral, deplorable though it may be, is already reflected in increased rates although it may not be quite so easy to express the increase in terms of rate poundage as may so conveniently be done with our salaries. There is no point in burking the issue because of that.

Let us be told what is the true comparison between 1945 and now, then I, for one, will accept the evidence and the conclusion to which it leads. But I will not accept gladly a blind appeal that "arbitration will do us no good," or that "an unfavourable award would weaken the staff." We have a National Joint Council and its constitution includes provision for a reference to arbitration to settle disputes. I suggest that it would be far more damaging to the staff if, having negotiated for an increased bonus on arguments in which, presumably, they believed, they had not the courage to put those arguments to the test. And if the employers have not the courage to face their electorate with a decision to recognise the increased cost of living, then let the award of an arbitrator relieve them of that painful necessity.

"CASEBY."

Letters for the January journal (to be published on January 1) must reach the Editor, 1, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1., by December 10.

A SPECIAL CONFERENCE?

"Members Must Force Issue"

NO doubt the next issue of *Local Government Service* will contain some reference to the bonus and consolidation negotiations, on which there is so much widespread and bitter disappointment.

My branch feels strongly that the general membership must now force an issue and instructed me to seek the support of some other branches to a demand for a special Conference. I have written to a number of branches asking them to include the following notice of motion on the agendas for their annual meetings and to let me know in the meantime whether their executive committees will sponsor the motion:

That, in view of the failure of the National Executive Council to implement the instructions of the 1947 Annual Conference contained in the following resolution:

"That this Conference:

(a) Considers that the present cost-of-living bonus is totally inadequate; and

(b) Instructs the National Executive Council to take all necessary steps at the earliest possible opportunity to have the bonus completely revised with a view to a substantial increase so as to bring it in line with the actual present-day cost of living, and at the same time to take steps to have the revised bonus consolidated in the basic salary,"

this general meeting of the ———— Branch, held on ———— demands that a special Conference of NALGO be called to direct the N.E.C. to declare a dispute for arbitration by the National Arbitration Tribunal within 28 days of the date of this special Conference unless in the meantime a recommendation of the National Joint Council for a substantial increase has been transmitted to all local authorities.

The response so far has been gratifying, and includes favourable replies from several large branches. Out of 25 replies, 12 executive committees have promised support; four branch secretaries have intimated the probable support of their executives; five executives have decided to place our suggested motion before their branch annual meetings; two executives have decided to await the outcome of the next meeting of the National Joint Council; one has decided to leave the question in the hands of the N.E.C.; *and only one branch has deprecated our action.*

I have had considerable correspondence with Headquarters since May, but, in the hope that the N.E.C. or the staff representatives on the N.J.C. would, in view of the Conference resolution, do something effective within a reasonable time, m executive refrained from any unusual actio until October 17 when, failing any apparen progress, the committee decided to seek suppor for the calling of the special Conference. Thi decision was immediately sent to Headquarters with the suggestion that the N.E.C. might itsel consider calling the Conference. Headquarter replied on October 20, that my letter would b submitted to the N.E.C. as soon as possible, bu we have had no further communication.

On November 6, however, a circular lette from the general secretary to branches included statement on consolidation. Among other things we learned that the N.E.C. held a special meetin on October 23 to consider consolidation, and on must assume that they did not then even conside the calling of a special Conference.

The statement can be regarded only as report of lack of progress. After all thes months, we are informed that the N.E.C. ha decided to "press for negotiations to continue" and that our own side of the N.J.C. could d no more than move that "negotiations should continue in the executive committee."

They could not even tie the employers down to actual dates for the meetings of either the executive committee or the N.J.C. It would be hard to find a more definite admission of abject failure—and still there is no suggestion of stronger action. Surely these amazing delaying tactics, now supported by the motion of our own representatives, cannot be allowed to continue.

I hope that those many branches with whom I was unable to communicate will consider giving their support to the motion set out above, and, if their annual meetings approve it, forward it to me as soon as possible. Provided it is in my hands by December 15, it will be in time.

LESLIE J. A. MOIR.
Croydon Branch — Honorary Secretary.

"N.E.C.'s Black Bonus Record"

IN June, the N.E.C. was instructed by Conference to secure a substantial increase in the bonus and to consolidate it. Last month, it leaked out that the employers would consolidate only at existing rates, that is, a £360 maximum for General Division, and so on.

Where now are the fine promises of Messrs. BEVAN, RILEY, and YOUNG? Mr. Bevan said in June that the salaries the staff side were seeking would compare favourably with those secured by the L.C.C. staff (a General clerical male maximum of £468). Mr. Riley said consolidation meant a rise, whether of £15 or £20 or £30. Mr. Young rebuked me for saying that consolidation would give lower rates than the civil service had before their recent rise. What now?

Although they tamely gave way to the employers about the new A.P.T. grade 5a, in the hope of a better bargain on bonus, the N.E.C. now admits failure to get anything. Throughout the war we had to wait for bonus till the civil service and others had won rises. We were always behind and never made up the leeway. Local government rates of pay were inferior to those of comparable employment and the Charter failed to bring equality, despite the surrender of bonus claims for 1946–7. Members, generally, have undoubtedly expected substantial improvement through the bonus—and have been led to expect it by the N.E.C. Once again the "leaders" have led us to disaster. There are rumours of cuts and standstill in wages. We are far worse placed than any of our opposite numbers, the teachers, the civil servants, and the bank and insurance employees, most of whom already have a consolidated provincial male minimum of £500 a year for clerical work. What shall we do? Trust the good old N.E.C.? Wait till they offer themselves for re-election in the spring to show our disapproval?

I suggest that we act at once by giving support to the Croydon plan already sent to branches—to call a special Conference, at which the N.E.C. would be instructed to declare a dispute within 28 days, failing recommendation from the N.J.C. to local authorities of a substantial advance in bonus. This can be done under Rule 21, which requires a requisition from ten branches, authorised by a general meeting and a total deposit of £100. Manchester and other branches have

NALGO's move last month to new headquarters next door to Madame Tussaud's Waxworks Exhibition has had startling results.

eady pledged full support. The special conrence should be demanded as early as possible. o wait is to play into the hands of the employers nd of the N.E.C., whose bonus record is so ack that, even if they get a last-minute offer, eir mismanagement should be examined now nd not at the Bournemouth conference.

It was impossible at Southport to fix the bonus rget for the N.E.C., but it is clear that this should e done at the special conference. If they are ven any more rope they will unfortunately not ng themselves alone but the rank and file too.

A. F. HUTT,
Manchester Branch. Honorary Secretary.

947 Wives Need More!

HERE is my reply to suggestions that those who want an increase in the bonus fail to ake allowance for salary increases granted by ost authorities when adopting Charter scales.

It is a comparison between the annual expendiire of two clerks, one in 1938 and one to-day, ut both aged 30, married, and looking for a house.

	1947	1938
otal Income	£360	£240
ess Superannuation	£20	£12
Income Tax	£29	£2
Building Society *	£85	£42
Rates	£18	£16
Schedule " A " Tax	£9	£5
Insurance	£3	£1
Fuel & Light	£20	£15
Husband's Exes †	£69	£41
	£253	£134
eaving for Wife	£107	£106

Assuming that the cost of house was £500 in 1938 and is 1,300 to-day.
Including £18 for clothes against £10 in 1938, £30 for gorettes (ten a day) against £14 (fifteen a day), £7 for res (unchanged) and £14 for sundries, against £10.

According to these figures, although the clerk's ross salary has risen by £120, or 50 per cent., he an allow his wife only £1 more each year for ousekeeping. The rise in prices makes this bsurd.

Some may say that the clerk should rent a house t a rent controlled at the 1939 figure, but, as a aluer and surveyor, I have yet to find how he can nd such a house to-day.

A bricklayer in 1938 had a wage of 1s. 5½d. an hour, or £3 4s. 2d. a week. Now he gets 2s. 5d. an hour, or £5 6s. 4d. a week—an increase of 66 per cent.

If the clerk had an increase of 66 per cent. on his counterpart's salary he would get £398 8s., or £38 8s. a year more than he does, and almost exactly the extra for which, I understand, a demand is being made.

So far as I can see, the bricklayer is expected to have the same ability at his job as his 1938 counterpart, but the local authority clerk has far more to face than his 1938 equivalent, what with a spate of Acts of Parliament and Ministerial Orders.

" PROFESSIONAL NEVERACLERK."

" Is the Staff Side Half-Hearted ? "

THE letters published on this page must surely, by now, have convinced the N.E.C. that there is something radically wrong with the Charter and its application, yet the attitude of each critic and applauder still seems to be governed by his own grading. I imagine that if our representatives experienced life on the general grade—and I don't mean at £300, but at 25, 26, or 27, the age of many married men, or at 21, 22, or 23, the age of the hoping-to-marry—they would take a much more urgent line in the negotiations.

N A L G O's chief organisation officer, J. E. N. Davis, when speaking recently at a Bristol branch meeting held to express members' dissatisfaction with the bonus, painted a vivid picture of the difficulties of a negotiator. That was rather like telling a drowning man how difficult and unpleasant it was to swim towards him in the nasty, cold water! But if we had felt any sympathy, his closing remarks that he had a " sneaking " regard for much of what had been said, killed it. He may have meant something else—we hope he did, for a negotiator must surely believe in his case—otherwise his remark was an insult to the feelings of many members who do not enjoy being in real need of more money.

Cost-of-living negotiations have been too long protracted. Employers seem to be waiting for a freeze-wages policy, but has not the staff side been half-hearted ?

A 50 to 60 per cent. increase in the bonus is comparativcly chicken-feed when it amounts to less than 10 per cent. of one's salary, but vitally important if it approaches 20 per cent. Thus, if it proves impossible to carry the higher grades, for Heaven's sake make an all-out effort for an immediate improvement of the general grade.

If our present representatives cannot do better, they might at least say so and make room promptly for someone who can.

" ERB."

" Real Hardship in Prospect "

THE Chancellor's decision not to increase food subsidies gives added urgency to the widespread demand for improvement in General division salaries. To officers in that grade, especially if married, rising food prices with pegged salaries present a prospect of real hardship.

General division salaries are too low. They fail to attract the best entrants or to pay a living wage at a marriageable age. The grade is too long, and this, with the fact that possession of the promotion examination or any other certificate does not automatically provide promotion, stifles initiative and incentive to study.

The General division should begin at a salary comparable to that of the 16-year-old entrant to the civil service (£140 in the provinces and £150 in London) and should reach its present maximum at 25. Then, age-for-wage increments should cease, but, from that age, promotion to the Clerical division, with its £360 maximum, should be automatic if the officer has passed—or as soon as does pass—the promotion examination.

I submit that this arrangement would meet most of the objections to the existing grade, would attract a better junior entrant, give a living wage at a marriageable age, provide a real incentive to take the promotion examination, and result in increased efficiency throughout the service.

This letter is submitted not only as a basis for discussion, but for action. N A L G O must fight for real improvements in the General division with all the energy the urgency of the situation demands.

WM. H. ALLEN.

We regret that, owing to pressure on space, it has been necessary to hold over more than two pages of letters this month. As many as possible will be published next month, but correspondents will help by keeping letters short.

New L.G. and Assistance Bills Will Compensate Displaced Officers

Two Bills of special importance to many members of N A L G O—the Local Government Bill and the National Assistance Bill—were published last month. Below we summarise their provisions, with special emphasis on the compensation clauses.

WHILE the main purpose of the Local Government Bill is to secure greater equality of rates throughout the country, the provisions of most interest to members are those dealing with valuation and rating procedure.

This part of the Bill applies only to England and Wales, and its object is to centralise the work of valuation for rating purposes. It provides that, in future, valuation for rates shall be made not by local authorities, but by valuation officers of the Board of Inland Revenue, with rights of appeal firstly to local valuation courts selected from panels of local people according to schemes made by county and county borough councils, and secondly to the county courts, which may be specially selected by the Lord Chancellor. The procedure for valuation for rates in London will be brought into line with that in the Provinces.

The new arrangements will be brought into operation on a date to be fixed by the Minister of Health, and from that date assessment committees, county valuation committees, and the Central Valuation Committee will cease to exist. There is no provision for transfer of officers.

By Clause 120, the Minister is required to make regulations providing for the payment by the appropriate authority of compensation to persons who are, or who, but for any war service in which they have been engaged, would be officers or servants of any rating authority, assessment committee, county valuation committee, the Central Valuation Committee, the Railway Assessment Authority, or the Anglo-Scottish Railways Assessment Authority, who suffer loss of employment or loss or diminution of emoluments which is attributable to the coming into force of any part of the Act.

End of the Poor Law.

The National Assistance Bill applies to England, Wales, and Scotland. Its general object is to substitute for certain existing services a comprehensive scheme of assistance and welfare services which will complete the main pattern of the new social legislation. All local government responsibility for the relief of destitution will give place to a new service of national assistance, taking the form mainly of financial aid to those in need.

On the other hand, residential accommodation for the aged, the infirm, and others who require care and attention, with special welfare services for certain handicapped persons, is to remain a local government function entrusted to county councils and county boroughs and (in Scotland) large burghs, and will be a local rate charge, with some Exchequer assistance. It will not be concerned with the relief of destitution as in the past, and the local Poor Law institution as now known will disappear. The services of local authorities will not extend to children under sixteen who do not live with their parents or guardians; it is intended to deal with the care and maintenance of such children in another Bill.

Public assistance committees of local authorities will disappear with the repeal of the Poor Law, and the Bill provides for the new functions under the Bill being referred to a new committee appointed for the purpose, or alternatively, to a suitable existing committee approved by the Minister. As in the Local Government Bill, there is no provision for transfer of officers affected.

The compensation clause is vague as to the persons who will be entitled to compensation. It requires the Minister of Health, or, in Scotland, the Secretary of State, to make regulations providing for the payment by county councils, county boroughs, and large burghs, of compensation:

(*a*) to persons of such descriptions as may be stated in the regulations who, immediately before such date as the regulations shall appoint, were employed or engaged in such full-time work as the regulations shall state, and who suffer loss of employment or loss or diminution of emoluments which is attributable to the passing of the National Insurance Act, 1946, the Health Service Act, 1946, the National Health Service (Scotland) Act, 1947, or the Bill; and

(*b*) to persons of such descriptions as may be stated in the regulations who having, before such date as the regulations shall appoint, been employed or engaged in such full-time work as the regulations shall state, and being persons who would have been so employed or engaged immediately before that date, but for any national service (as defined in the regulations) in which they have been engaged, who lose the prospect of their re-employment or engagement in any such work in consequence of the passing of any of the Acts mentioned above, or the Bill.

The clause further provides that the compensation shall be payable in so far as provision is not made in that behalf by or under any other enactment. It is understood that the clause must necessarily be vague because it is not possible in the bill to indicate briefly all classes of persons who will come within the compensation provisions.

At the time when this report was prepared there had been no opportunity to study either of th Bills closely. Members can be assured, howeve that each Bill will be scrutinised very carefull

Fight for Transfer Rights

THE Association's fight to obtain transfe provisions in the Local Government Bi began in the second reading debate on Novembe 18. Calling for provisions similar to those co tained in previous measures, such as the Nationa Health Service, Transport, Electricity, and Tow & Country Planning Acts, T. W. BURDEN, M.P asked: "Why should all the knowledge of asses ment officers, rating and valuation officers b thrown away—these men redundant, thrown o the scrap heap after they have rendered suc valuable service? The staff concerned are deepl disturbed. . . . I ask the Minister to allay th legitimate anxiety, and, if necessary, to meet th appropriate trade union, the National Associatio of Local Government Officers, to discuss th removal of this obvious injustice."

Replying to the debate, Mr. JOHN EDWARD Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Healt said that the Government was "not in a positio to have a general transfer" and for that reaso there was no general transfer provision. But h added: "The job will be done, for the most par by those who do it now. We shall need to recru people who are experienced in rating valuatio . . . We shall look to the local authorities t provide us with large numbers of the staffs w shall need for this purpose."

MY BOOKSHELF

By EDWARD KA

Middlesbrough's Plan : Richmond Pride : A Bradford Century

A TOWN "in which every sense is violently assailed all day long by some manifestation of the making of metal," which "lacks diversity . . . and has no tradition," but whose "very bleakness and impetuousness has a vigorous beauty of its own"! Such is Middlesbrough, the stark, busy, north-east town, which has grown up, not round a cathedral or a castle, but round coke-ovens and blast furnaces. The *Middlesbrough Survey and Plan*, prepared by MAX LOCK and a team of able assistants and published by the corporation at 25s., is a social document of more than common significance. Some critics of planning try to represent it as a series of remote and ineffectual exercises; to none could this judgment be less suitably applied than to the present volume. Its authors have kept their feet well on the ground. Before they made their proposals, they examined carefully the foundations on which they had to build. Their survey of the physical and economic basis of the future Middlesbrough was as thorough as their inquiry into the mental attitude of its people.

They found the town to-day consisting of four residential belts, with the worst slums in the inner area where the houses had no baths, no gardens, no open spaces but the streets, and the best living conditions in the outer belt, though even there, communal facilities were lacking. Through the Social Survey, a sample of 1,400 families was asked for facts and opinions about housing, shopping, transport, and town improvement. Nor was this popular participation limited to the preliminary collection of data, for groups of school children took a hand by preparing studies of smoke pollution, maps showing the residential distribution of children in relation to schools, and many other social phenomena.

On such a basis, the authors succeed in bringing before our eyes a great sample of British industrial life; we see it as it is and as it can become, its achievements, its failures, and its promise—the pattern which should be followed for the future becoming plain.

On the technical side, the book is worthy of high commendation. It is handsomely printed and illustrated, and, more important, its subject-matter is well arranged, convenient for reference, and simply written.

An Ancient Borough

HOW different—though it lies but 25 miles away—is the subject of my next book. I have never been to Richmond in Yorkshire, a town of "old stone buildings grouped around the cobbled market-place, and the 'right noble ryver' that sings its way through the Dale," but after reading DAVID BROOKS' the *Story of Rich mond* (Jameson & Co., Richmond), I am dete mined to visit it, so intriguing a picture does paint of a town steeped in history yet with vigorous modern life and outlook.

In his introduction, the mayor describes th book as specially written for Richmond's "citizens to be." They will find no better intro duction to the history of their country than thi engaging account of the part their own town ha played in it, from the grant of its charter in 109 by Alan, Count of England and Brittany, for a annual payment of twenty-nine pounds (sinc reduced to twelve pounds and honourably pai to the Crown to this day), to the conferment of it freedom on the exiled King Haakon of Norwa nine centuries later.

Mr. Brooks, who is town clerk of Richmond tells of many delightful archaisms. Richmon employed a Cleaner of the Chandeliers at te shillings a year and a Keeper of the Engine a four guineas: the Mole Catcher received thirty five shillings plus the valuable emolument of "al the pelts" (I see some charter grading problem here!). But the town is more than a museum piece. Richmond's city fathers have been pioneer of local government, bringing piped water to th town in 1583, anticipating social insurance b nearly 200 years, obtaining a fire engine in 1765 opening a corporation school in 1811, and lightin their town by gas in 1821. Mr. Brooks record these achievements with pardonable pride. Writin with infectious enthusiasm, he brings the past an the present to vivid life and impresses on every pag his own deep love for his ancient borough and hi intense feeling of civic patriotism. Richmond ha found a worthy chronicler—and a worthy artist too, in Mrs. E. M. GRAY, whose delicate woodcut embellish the book.

Bradford's 100 Years

A CITY saved from destruction by a ghost wh appeared to the Royalist Earl of Newcastl at night and implored him to "Pity poor Brad ford"; tramcars drawn by ten horses and replace by steam vehicles travelling recklessly at twelv miles an hour; and a town "unique among th great municipalities because of its phenomen growth, its pioneering record, and its acknowledge importance as the centre of the world's woo textile industry"—such are the theme and th spirit of *Bradford* 1847-1947 produced by th "Yorkshire Observer" and presented free to th city council to mark the centenary of the town' incorporation. A gay, well-illustrated, self confident book, which even Bradford's rivals wil enjoy and perhaps forgive.

NALGO DIARY

By "ABINGDON"

eadquarters Moves to York Gate : "Citizen" to Increase Circulation : L. G. in Basic

ALGO Headquarters has left its West-minster offices on the historic Abingdon cet site beneath the shadow of the Houses Parliament, where, apart from the transfer the bigger departments to Croyde during early war years, it has flourished since 1926. The Association's new home is in two blocks buildings flanking York Gate, a turning leading th from Marylebone Road to Regent's Park, within two minutes' walk of Baker Street tion. Its new neighbour, also of international e, is Madame Tussaud's Waxworks Exhibition. new postal address and telephone number 1, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1, Lbeck 4481, to which all communications uld in future be addressed.

The move, begun in late October and not com-ted until the end of last month, was made essary by the desire of the Government to uire the Abingdon Street site for Parliamentary ces overflowing from the Palace of West-nster. In return, the Government offered it e of York Gate, part of the famous Georgian aces of Regent's Park, most of which have n taken over for use as Government offices. the buildings had suffered severely from bomb-and one had been destroyed, but now, after ensive repair, they are largely restored to the nity of their heyday—the early years of the century—when they were built by John Nash, atest Regency architect, as part of "a garden for aristocrats"—and the interiors, adapted modernised, provide the Association with ces far superior in space and amenity to those as left.

am told that 60 trips of the largest size in technicons were needed to transport all the niture, files, and other effects. This may be a clation to some members who are incredulous en told that Headquarters' staff numbers nearly —apart from those in the district offices. With Parliamentary officials almost sitting on doorstep waiting to move in, each department s moved out of Abingdon Street almost before paint dried in the new rooms they were to upy. Indeed, some, working to a strict time-le, were packed up and ready to go, but could do so because workmen had fallen behind edule. As a result, the work of some depart-nts became temporarily dislocated, and mem-s writing to Headquarters are asked to be ient if, in the next few weeks, they do not get lies as promptly as usual.

The new council chamber is still under con-uction and is not likely to be ready before the w Year.

cal Government in "Basic"

EW experts in local government would, I fancy, care to undertake to write an account t in Basic English. Yet that is what J. HAYDN OMAS, enterprising clerk to **Uckfield** R.D.C., done for a souvenir booklet for a party of United Nation delegates from China and ntries of Eastern Europe who visited his council investigate its work. The result is a brilliant cess, describing the main outlines of local ernment in simple, crisp English, free from hé and administrative jargon. In addition, the klet contains an address of welcome in English French, a specimen rate demand note, simpli-statistics showing the range of Uckfield's vices, and articles—also in Basic—by chief cers who later answered questions on them.

Chance to Read "Citizen"

EGINNING in the New Year, "Citizen," the journal of civic affairs, on whose editorial isory board NALGO is represented, will lish every two months instead of every month will appear with slightly smaller—but not er—pages.

This decision, forced upon the publishers by prospect of a continued and possibly more te shortage of paper, will enable them to rge the circulation of "Citizen" and meet nands for copies from would-be subscribers erto unable to obtain them. "Citizen's" ourful cover, fine illustrations, and tasteful out will be unaffected, and monthly publication be resumed as soon as paper supplies permit.

In its first year of publication, the magazine has established a reputation for attractive and impartial presentation of local government and social service news, and, although written primarily for the layman, has many readers amongst local government officers. Its contributors have included such well-known people as Professor ABERCROMBIE, Sir TRUSTRAM EVE, ANEURIN BEVAN, LORD LATHAM, Dr. A. W. ROBSON, and W. E. JACKSON. Its articles have been widely quoted

ANOTHER IMPENDING APOLOGY

by the B.B.C. and national newspapers and have been circulated throughout the world by the Central Office of Information.

Would-be readers should place a standing order with the publishers, Walter King Ltd., 11, Bolt Court, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4. The price is 1s. 6d. and the annual subscription 9s. 6d., including postage.

P.R. Posies

Bouquets for outstanding public relations ventures go this month to :

Blackpool branch—for its initiative in staging a maternity and child-welfare display and an information and literature bureau at a local cinema showing "The Birth of a Baby."

Bradford branch for sponsoring the idea, put into effect by the council, of publishing a record of speeches made by councillors at the city's centenary council meeting. They will be presented to teachers and students in Bradford's schools.

Coventry corporation, whose P.R.O., JAMES TAYLOR, is to edit "Civic Affairs" a monthly news sheet to foster interest in the council's work, and due to appear for the first time next month.

Painless Extraction

THERE is no half-heartedness in paying trade union subscriptions at **Upton on Severn**, Worcestershire. Subscriptions due last October were received at Headquarters during the previous December and, last month, all members again agreed to the deduction from their salary cheques of contributions for the ensuing year.

Needless to say, the branch has 100 per cent. membership.

Speed your SOS

MEMBERS receiving notice, in accordance with Charter para. 18, that their employing authorities propose to dismiss or relegate them, should, if they want NALGO's help, ask for it *without delay*.

Recent Appointments . . .

THE following appointments have been made recently in Headquarters and district staffs :

ERNEST PLUSH, A.B.S., formerly with the Co-operative Permanent Building Society for 18 years, to be principal administrative assistant, NALGO Building Society, in place of F. SWINNINGTON, resigned.

A. J. PRIOR, B.Sc., A.C.A., formerly in private practice with a London firm of chartered accountants, and one-time secondary schoolmaster, to be internal auditor, finance department.

L. C. JONES, clerical assistant, **Logomia**, to be assistant district officer, temporarily attached to the Metropolitan district office.

. . . and Changes

JOHN C. HAMILTON left **Manchester** last month, where he was an assistant district officer, to take over the South Wales district office at **Cardiff**, replacing J. L. ROBSON, transferred to **Glasgow** in succession to HARRY RAE.

PHILIP GREENHALGH, administrative assistant, NALGO education department, left the Association last month to become assistant to H. Slater, secretary of the Local Government Examinations Board.

ELECTRICITY NOTES

By "YORK"

Electricity Branch Activity To Get More Light and Power

THIS corner, set aside for the affairs of electricity branches, will, I hope, shed more light upon, and lend more power to, the drive behind their recruitment, organisation, and activities. Electricity branches are asked to keep me posted with what they are doing.

Last month's reports reflected a steady growth in numbers of branches formed and members recruited ; a greater use of NALGO's ancillary services ; and a tendency for some company branches to leave the protective wing of their mother organisations—local government branches—and stand on their own feet.

At district level, the Scottish district advisory sub-committee, drawn from company members alone, met in Glasgow in October and recommended to the district committee that (a) it should itself be broadened to represent local government as well as company interests, and (b) beginning in the New Year, separate branches should be formed in each private undertaking. Last month, the **Southern** electric supply company and the **Ayrshire** electricity board formed their own branches.

In the South of England, the Southern district has formed an electricity sub-committee of three representatives each from company and municipal undertakings, and the district chairman, vice-chairman, and treasurer to look after its 1,000 electricity members grouped in nine company and 15 local government branches.

Two new companies are this month added to the list of 193 English undertakings whose staffs have joined existing or formed new branches. They are the **North-Eastern** electric and the **Weald** electricity supply companies.

Growing strength in the Midlands is evident in increasing membership figures—**Mid-Lincolnshire** electric supply from 75 to 114 in seven months ; **Northampton group** electric from 131 to 150 ; and **Leicestershire & Warwickshire** electric power from 74 to 90.

With an increase from 52 in April to 67 to-day, **Central Sussex** electricity are on the way to 100 per cent. membership. The branch secretary, H. A. RANDALL, tells me that the district committee, though busy with local government problems, is showing more interest now in electricity branches' troubles. Although Central Sussex NALGO is not yet recognised by the local employers, the branch executive has already put its suggestions for a "preliminary review" of establishment before the management, and at a full branch meeting recently, it was forcefully urged that a statement of claim for recognition should be made on the company.

I am asked to announce that the **Central London** electricity branch will hold its annual meeting at Mary Sumner House, Tufton Street, London, S.W.1, on December 10 at 6.0 o'clock. All public utility members are welcome. E. A. S. YOUNG, N.E.C., will speak.

A useful introduction to the work of the electricity industry worker, including the clerk and administrator, has been prepared, and published as an attractive booklet by **Portsmouth** electricity service, primarily as an inducement to young people to make the industry their career.

SCOTTISH NOTES

Grouping System Collapsing? : Health Staffs' Pay Surprise : Membership Leap

THE steady pressure of the staff side of the Joint Industrial Council against the retention of the invidious grouping of Scottish local authorities is having effect.

The J.I.C. executive committee, at its October16 meeting, provisionally adopted a revised system of grouping, subject to the views of authorities and staffs concerned and approval of the full Council.

It provided for the movement between groups of the following authorities :

From Group 2 to 1—Burghs of **Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, Perth, Dumfries,** and **Stirling** ; Counties of **Fife, Midlothian,** and **Stirling.**

From Group 3 to 2—Burghs of **Arbroath, Galashiels, Hawick, Selkirk, Bathgate, Helensburgh, Rothesay, Troon,** and **St. Andrews** ; Counties of **Aberdeen, Dumfries, Kirkcudbright,** and **Angus.**

From Group 1 to 2—**Gourock** burgh.

From Group 2 to 3—Burghs of **Denny, Burntisland,** and **Milngavie.**

The proposals of the new Local Government Bill for supplementing local authority income are a strong argument for the abolition of grouping, since such grouping is based on capacity to pay. The Bill proposes to augment local authority income in so far as it falls below a certain minimum determined by reference to the average rateable value per head of population, weighted to benefit materially remote Highland and country areas with low populations but high road mileages. When this is added to the relief to local authorities through loss of health and other services, the case for grouping will cease to exist.

Amongst other decisions and progress reported at the executive committee were :

Charter Progress.—This included :

Recent adoption of the Scottish Charter by **Ayr county, Ayr burgh, Greenock, Langholm,** and **Lockerbie.**

Plans for joint approaches of employers and staff to **Bute county, Gourock, Milngavie,** and **Newport,** to persuade them to adopt the Charter.

The following authorities have now come into line: 33 out of 35 counties (**Stirling** and **Bute** being the outsiders) ; all four counties of cities ; each of the 20 large burghs ; and 90 out of 171 small burghs.

Only eight in the last group have populations exceeding 5,000, and, of the 81 failing to adopt the Charter and having populations below that figure, 35 have no full-time officers. (Will Convenor MANN of **Lanark C.C.** please note this reply to his recent statement ?)

Miscellaneous Division.—Rates for women attendance officers, out-door collectors, and telephone operators performing duties regarded as normal, are : in Group 1 local authorities, £130 to £210 ; in Group 2, £120 to £200 ; and in Group 3, £110 to £190. All increments are £10. "Plus" rates are to be negotiated for extra responsibility.

Examination Recognition.—Included for grant are those successful in the examination of the Institute of Sewage Purification and those gaining Edinburgh University's certificate of public administration. The Institute of Housing and Parks Administration will shortly be invited to put its case for recognition of its own examinations. Local authorities will be urged to tell their staffs what examinations they regard as appropriate for various departments.

Governors and Matrons.—Proposals adjusted by the staff side and the Governors and Matrons Association will now be submitted to the J.I.C.

Training Branch Key Men

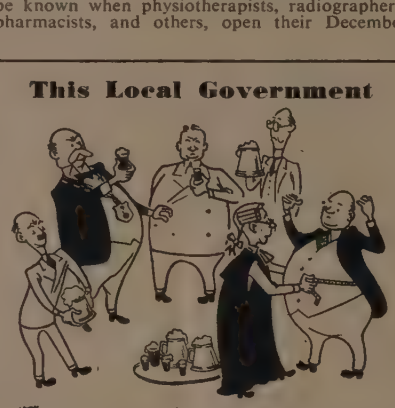
Observers at the West of Scotland's first weekend school for trade union students, at **Dunoon** on November 22 and 23, reported a "full house." More than 70 present and prospective branch officers listened to lecturer J. BELL of Glasgow University's extra mural studies department, and N A L G O's veterans JOE SWINDEN and JIMMY MORTIMER, unfolding the history of trade unionism, the development of collective bargaining, and the part which N A L G O played in both. District committee chairman, SAM BRODIE, a name synonymous with N A L G O history in Scotland, led discussion on the part which the Association (including every branch and member) still has to play. Public relations chairman T. SPENCE, and branch secretaries MILLER, BAIRD and ROBB put the benefit of their long experience at the disposal of the guests. Especially welcome were representatives from newly-enrolled company and hospital staffs.

Now, another school, with more time for study of N A L G O branch, district, and national structure, has been suggested.

Health Staffs' Rise

At the National Joint Committee for Staffs in Health Services on October 17, the employers "shook" the staff by offering a £60 rise in reply to a claim for £50 ! The staff side's answer will be known when physiotherapists, radiographers, pharmacists, and others, open their December pay packets. Medical laboratory technicians may yet share in the hand-round after special representation on their behalf at the next committee meeting.

This Local Government



"The Council directed the Clerk to take appropriate measures"—a cliché for which five shillings goes to F. W. KEEP, clerk of CAM parish council.

J.I.C. Committee Decisions

Unanimous decisions of a meeting of the J.I.C. appeals committee on October 31—now awaiting confirmation of the full Council—were to the effect that :

The grading of sanitary inspectors occupying established vacancies, as such, must be within the A.P.T. division. (**Motherwell** and **Lanark** county inspectors, please note !)

For the purposes of recognising an examination success, the date of passing an examination is the date on which the examinee is notified of his success—not the date he sits. (This for **Dumfries** burgh, quibbling over the payment of an examination grant to its depute town clerk.)

"Carry-over" arrangements do not apply to those promoted or recruited after November 15.

Membership's Record Jump

As the district annual report goes to press, a record rise in membership of 2,700 to more than 14,000 is reported, few branches having failed to add to last year's numbers. While the Scottish Charter may be the immediate cause —an effective answer to its critics—the militant spirit of trade unionism shown by ex-servicemen, who are determined that all shall benefit and all shall pay, has played a big part. We are getting nearer the centre of that hard core of non-unionism.

Summer Plans Already

We have secured the use of the Residence Hall, St. Andrews, for next year's summer school from June 19 to 26. Put a note in your diary now, and watch this column.

Hail and Farewell

Last month, JOHN ROBSON, district officer for South Wales, took over the Scottish district offices in place of HARRY RAE now appointed assistant secretary to the National Joint Council for England and Wales. Mr. Robson is no stranger to Scotland which he served, as district officer, from 1944 to 1946.

EDUCATION NEWS

Notts' Fine Post-Entry Training Scheme

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE C.C. has set asi the generous sum of £1,000 to spend text books for its officer students. Its decision do so is part of an approved scheme, prepar by its staff joint committee under the encourag ment of Charter para. 8, to help officers quali for promotion.

Its intention was ultimately to cover a wi range of courses and examinations, but to co centrate, at first, on the promotion examinatio of the Local Government Examinations Board.

The scheme, of which the following is an ou line, will not operate to the disadvantage of tho who have already begun work :

Day and evening classes for the promotio examination to be arranged at once by the joi committee ;

Staff over 18 to be released from work to atte the course on one half-day each week provid one evening attendance is made and a sat factory report is received from the colle principal. (Officers will be expected to atte on two evenings a week.)

Similar concessions for those attending D.P.A and other courses approved later, provid office work is not unduly affected.

For those under 18, the provisions of the schem are based on the requirement, eventually to b come compulsory, of the Education Act, 194 that all under that age shall be released for fr education on two half-days a week. The schem accordingly provides that :

Employees under 18 shall be released on one who or two half-days a week as accommodatio allows :

Compulsory attendance shall be arranged by t education committee when possible ; and

The curriculum shall be largely cultural, wi some vocational work.

Second-hand Books Wanted

To help students find the text books th lack, the N A L G O lending library wants secon hand, up-to-date, ones for loan or re-sale. Plea write, stating edition, to N A L G O Educatio Department, 1, York Gate, Regent's Par London, N.W.1.

N.C.I. Successes

Of the 52 successful candidates at the Weigh and Measures Inspectors' Society examination the Board of Trade held in the Spring, 35 we N A L G O students.

Potato Picking Swells War Memorial Fund

TO reach the target of six shillings a head f N A L G O's war memorial fund, members of **Margate** branch spent several eve ings recently picking up potatoes for a loc farmer—and £34 17s. 6d., for the fund. T balance of £2 13s. 6d. required was contribute by less energetic members.

Could one imagine a more ingenious, yet mo simple way of helping the country, the farme the fund, and themselves ? Bravo, Margate !

By the end of September the total of the fun had reached nearly £22,500. The money will b devoted to the cost of purchasing and equippin "Knole Lodge" convalescent home, Bourn mouth, chosen to commemorate N A L G O war dead. Up to October 31, 125 branches ha raised and forwarded to Headquarters, the shares of the target.

Additions to the published list are : **Bosto Chatham, Chester rural, Chippenham, Droxfor Essex Rivers Catchment Board, Newcastle und Lyme,** and **Margate.**

English Charter Progress

OF the 1,530 local authorities in England an Wales, 1,418 had by November 14 adopte the Charter. This is an improvement of thre on the figure published in the October journa One hundred and two other authorities have als come into line, making a grand total of 1,52

Additions to the last published list are :

Urban Districts—**Denholme, Pickering,** an **Rishton.**

Ad. Hoc Authorities—**Somerset Rivers Catch ment Board,** and **West Derby Assessment Com mittee.**

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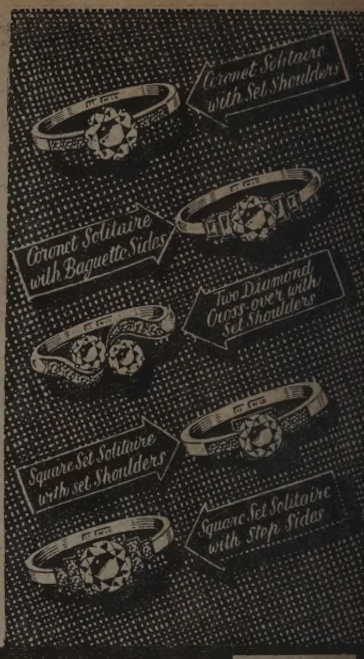
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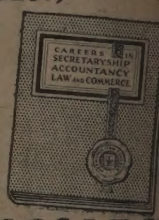

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